

# Twenty moments ...

a personal  
record of 2020  
in pictures

David  
Harrison

[mlt.photography](http://mlt.photography)



Through the bole of the tree

It's been a strange year, and that's a fact. The year of Covid-19. It's meant that there has been less scope for holiday trips; no photo trips at all and far more concentration on "things close to home". Therefore this year - apart from the photos from our Norwegian trip will be almost exclusively from locations in and around Cardiff, and even more specifically near to the house and garden.

The other thing that's different this year is the inclusion of a few more pictures which have people in them, because it's difficult to tell the story of the year without reference to the people who've been as much affected as us. There are obvious omissions of course, no pictures of Pete and Shells, Ewan and Maggie - who we were due to go and see in March, before lockdown, and none of Gail and Martin, James and Tom - who we only briefly saw over the summer, and in Cornwall. You'll also have to search for pictures of David James - but he has his own book this year!

So we start with a couple of shots that in a way sum up the year and the strangeness of it all. Alongside is a shot of a sparrowhawk captured in our garden in the silver birch. What a wonderful bird and lovely that it's visited us again - hopefully without taking any smaller bird this time. Then opposite a mallard (in Roath Park Lake) seeming to stand facing against the stream of water. This is something which I think all of us have felt at sometime this year - trying to face the opposite and push behind us all that is going on in front of us.

So I hope you enjoy this year's collection of images. There was another book I produced earlier in the year for our Norwegian Trip so not all those pictures are included. I've just tried to choose the ones I like best.







I'm not going to turn round for you!













Is this how a fish sees this tree?





Bending reality







The previous two pages were of Roath Park taken in the early part of the year, again you have to ask is there a symbolism in the distorted view of reality that you get with the fish-eye lens that mirrors are feelings about the year.

A real joy in the early part of the year was going to Forest Farm and the Glamorgan Canal nearby to Whitchurch.

Here I was able to get these two lovely shots of robins; an equally lovely picture of Jenny by the canal and then two star shots - a lovely one of a moorhen and then the one of a kingfisher - the first time I'd ever seen one. A real joy.















Double Moorhen Vision





My first Kingfisher





As I've mentioned, the garden got a lot of focus this year and in particular we watched the tadpoles come and go. This lot I think were eaten quite early on; but a later "brood" deposited in a washing-up bowl lasted right the way through the year until I decided to transfer them to this spot - what happened next, I'll never know!





This shot is a HDR composite taken in the restaurant of the Cardiff & Vale College on Dumballs Road. It would have been difficult to get the shot without using the three shots merged into one and I was quite pleased with the result.





And so we start our Norwegian Trip with Hurtigruten. A coastal voyage, chasing the Northern Lights and going to the far north **and the** Arctic Circle, before returning to Bergen. Here are my two companions, Jane and Jenny - the one wearing the magic glasses! She must have taken them off after we returned because we got the trip in just before lockdown - in February.





The quayside at Ålesund





A colourful flowershop in Molde



Preparing fish - Ålesund

We only had a short stop in Molde but that was long enough to spy this colourful flowershop and (as I recall) find a bar to have a drink of wine. Then it was back to the ship for the first of our lovely dinners. We'd agreed not to spare ourselves on the wine - which was incredibly expensive - using "mum's purse" to fund our evening drinks.





Rose window - Nidaros Cathedral, Trondheim

We had a couple of hours to walk around Trondheim and visited the cathedral as well as the lovely Gamle Bybrua - the bridge that spans the river that separates the old town from the more recent part of the town where the cathedral is. We managed (again) to find a street cafe to have a drink and made our way back to the ship where we saw the row of bicycles that you see in the shot later on. Trondheim is a lovely town and we definitely benefited from seeing it with the sun shining and a clear blue sky.





The old bridge, Gamle Bybrua - Trondheim





The old bridge and the cathedral - Trondheim



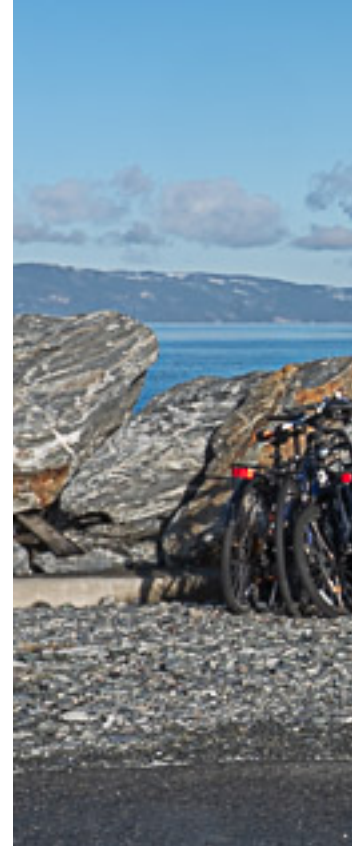






Reflections - Trondheim









Loads of bikes - Trondheim



leaving Trondheim









Kjeungskjær Lighthouse as the sun sets









Trøndelag and a low angle sun





Farming and fishing on the edge





Sunset and wind power - Trøndelag





### The Northern Lights south of Rørvik

Having missed out in Iceland, I'd always hoped that this trip would enable us to see the Northern Lights, and we weren't to be disappointed. The first time during our journey north we were raised from our beds by the ship's intercom to be informed that they were putting on a show - thus saving Hurtigruten from the expense of giving us a free trip as there was a "guarantee" attached to the trip.

What was disappointing was the "scrum" that was formed at the front of the ship, just in front of our window that was impossible to work your way round, and certainly impossible to get to the front with a tripod! So I took up station on the side of the ship which was certainly acceptable and certainly preferable to the scrum at the front.

We had a show on the way south as well which were different as you can see, and I didn't even think about going to the front of the ship. I'd worked out how best to use a vantage point from the side of the ship by then. The interesting thing is of course that you need a digital camera and time lapse to really see "the lights" - they don't look like this with the naked eye!!!





Northern Lights between Kjøllefjord and Mehamn









Sunrise - approaching the Arctic Circle





Fugløy - heading north near Bo





Near Ørnes in black and white







The island of Fugløy between Ørnes and Bodø



South of Tromsø, Mjelde









Colourful Havøysund









A solitary cottage - Honningsvåg



Avalanche, what avalanche? Near Honningsvåg



Entering Honningsvåg



Storm approaching Honningsvåg





Sunset approaching at Vardø

This picture represents the first one taken during the journey south, it was about 4:45 in the afternoon; you can see the days were quite short! Before that we'd had our only real bad spell of bad weather which had prevented us **do in the trip** to the North Cape from Hammerfest due to an avalanche on the road. But we had enjoyed our walk around Hamerfest - again raiding "mum's purse" and then the next day seeing Kirkenes in the snow.



So the journey south continued with the Lofoten Islands ahead of us and a coach trip from Harstad to Sortland. This was a trip we'd re-arranged to take the place of the North Cape excursion. It was a happy outcome as this time off the ship presented "many photo opportunities"!



Approaching Harstad as the dawn breaks





Snowy scene at Straumen, Lofoten Islands.



Panorama near Straumen, Lofoten Islands.





Reflections - Straumen



Sortland, Lofoten

Snow and sun - Straumen, Lofoten



Islands





Sunrise and it's Nesna next.





MS Polarlys arrives late into Sortland in the snow



Sunrise on the way to Nesna from Ørnes





Sea and mountains, Nesna

I think you can see how blessed we were the weather. For most of the time as we journeyed north and then back south the sun shone and the skies were blue. You couldn't have asked for better weather. The other book has a lot of shots a bit like these as we travelled through the Raftsund, saw the 100m wide opening into Trollfjord and made our way towards Nesna.

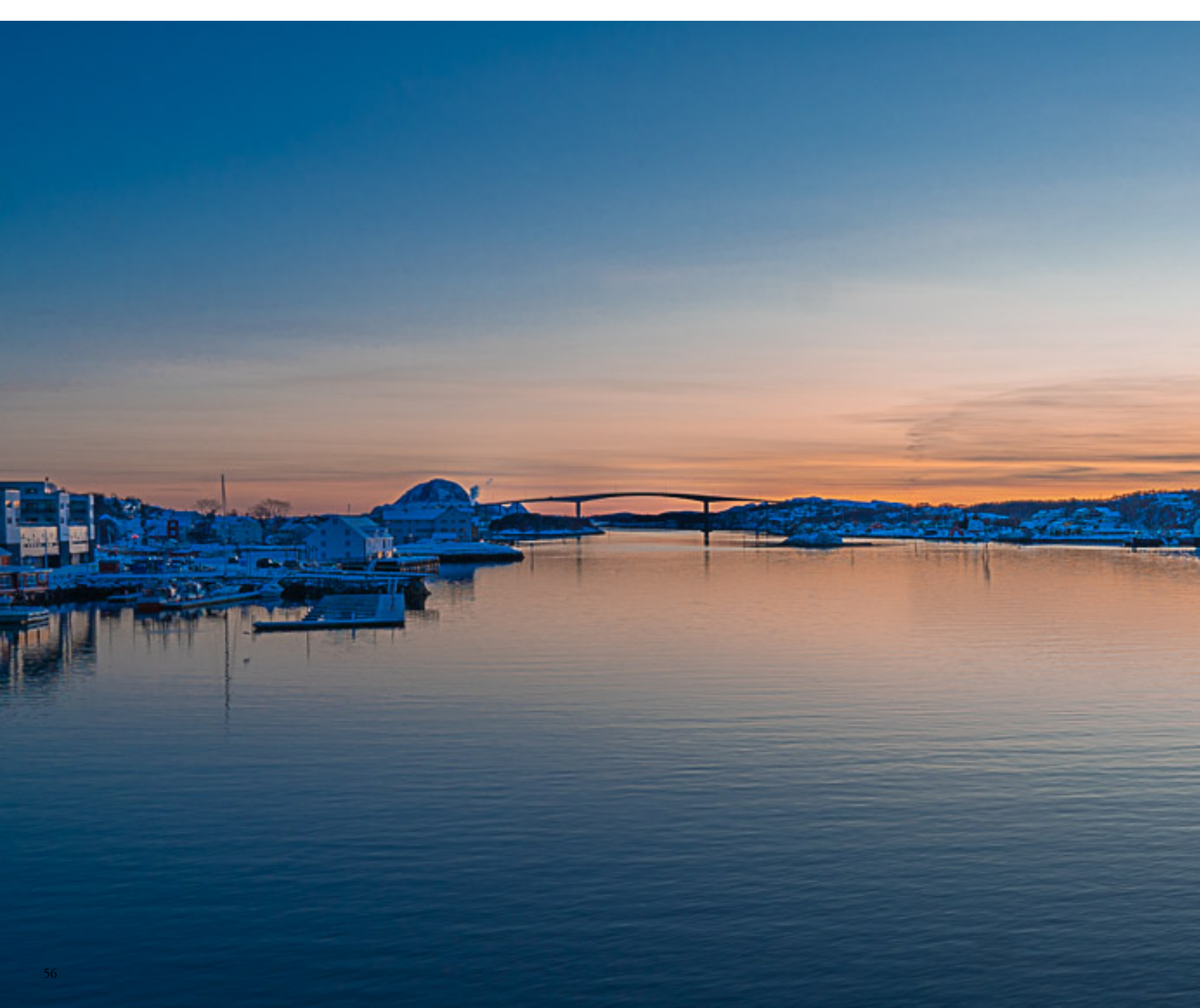


Approaching Nesna

What was ahead of us and was quite surprising - the sunsets we saw at Brønnøysund. The next two shots show this well. Then a large number of travellers stayed on deck as we left the port to look for the "mountain with a hole in it" - Torghatten. The moon even came out to enhance the picture.

The remainder of the trip seemed to pass in a blur as the ship seemed to speed up on its way back to Bergen, but there was a lovely sunset as we approached Kristiansund.

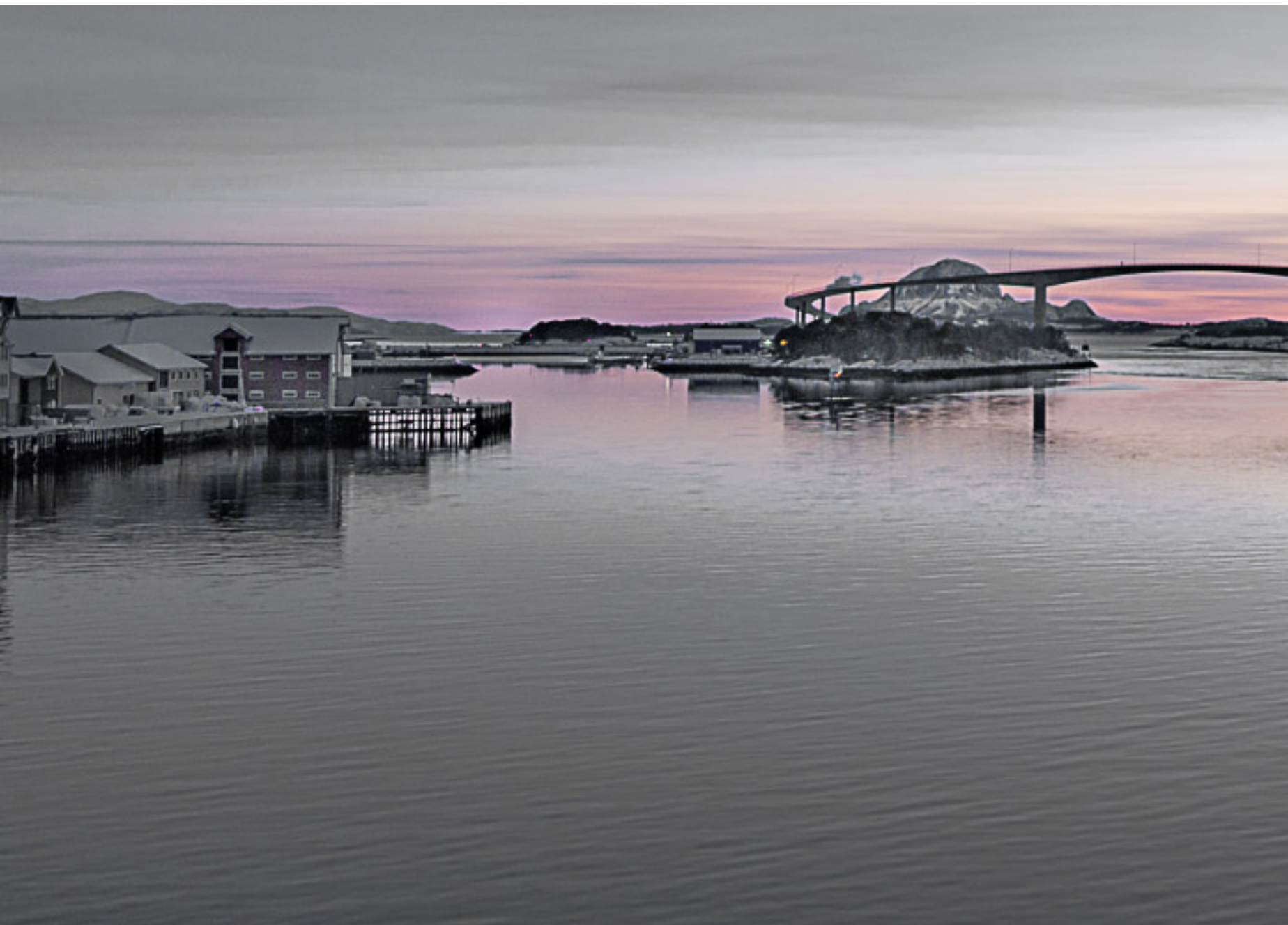






Smudgy sunset at Brønnøysund







Brønnøysund - a sunset





The mountain with a hole in it, Torghatten



Fishing with a view



Leaving Kristiansund







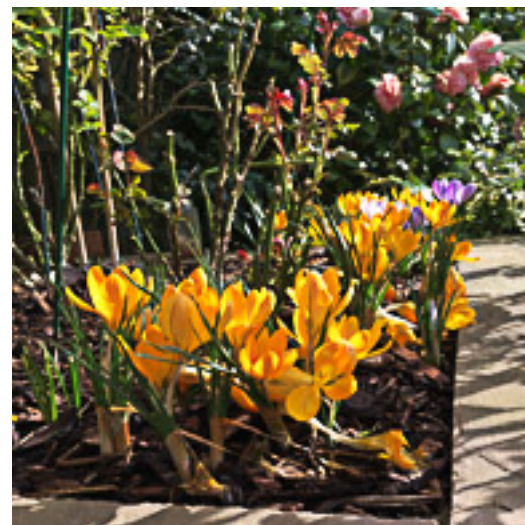


So a return to Cardiff, and back to a different reality. We'd wondered about the wisdom of trying to squeeze the Norwegian Trip in before our long-awaited trip to Australia, but in the end weren't we glad we'd chanced it! We cancelled on March 18th, just before lockdown was announced; in doing so we ensured the full refund of our flights - that was no real compensation though and we are aching to make the trip to Melbourne just as soon as we can.

What follows therefore is an eclectic collection of pictures taken in the garden, ones taken on spring walks, on themes inspired by the U3A Photography Group, but autumn colours and some very random shots generally involving Wallace and Gromit, with Papa Smurf to hand as well.

So we start with the first show of spring. The newly planted crocus in the rose bed, with Wallace considering why Papa Smurf is inverted - thanks to a lens ball.

Then there are three panoramas taken on a U3A Photo Shoot before lockdown kicked-in - Windsor Esplanade which has links to Roald Dahl; Mermaid Quay and Roald Dahl Plass and the Millenium Centre.































What do you do for your wedding anniversary when you're in lockdown, you dine-in and dress-up. Jenny did a marvellous job of presenting a lovely meal and wore a couple of wedding-day costumes to serve them - not forgetting the magic glasses.



The lens ball, along with the fish-eye lens is a diversion from "normal" photography. Here the image is flipped through 180degrees, so that the top is the bottom, and the bottom **the top** thus leaving the image in the lens ball showing the correct **way. Photo** taken at the bottom of the garden by the pond.





Trapped







Destination unknown



Wallace amongst the daffodils





Perhaps I'll just him off the bird table





All present and correct



For a short while the pond was well stocked with fish; the water was clear; I didn't see the heron; but then gradually they began to die. Probably ulcers. So 11 reduced to 4.





"Mother and child reunion" - Covid-style



Apple blossom

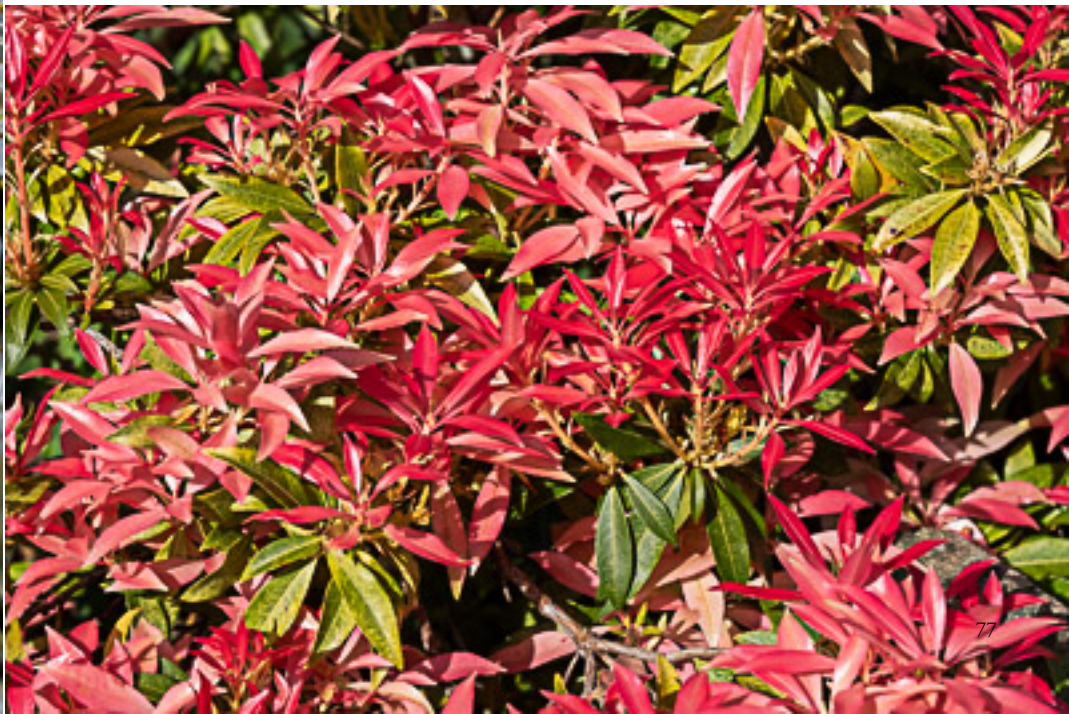


We were encouraged to get out and walk, and for a short time we did. I walked round the reservoir and witnessed the spring in all it's glory. The following pages show what a lovely spring we had.













Twiggy catkins

Cherry blossom, I think?



Nectar for





Looking down on a sapling







Magnolia







Camelia







Not surprisingly we spent as much time as we could in the garden in the lovely spring weather. This was our corner of sanity so-to-speak. The daffodils planted in the autumn presented a wonderful show and were most welcome.





Narcissi



Double daff



With the sun behind!



Double-dwarf narcissi





A U3A photo challenge - Framed. I decided to use the wonderful show from next door's clematis mixing with our ceanothus and one of Jenny's frames to take the shots on the facing page.

Then I was challenged on twitter to take seven shots on seven days so after the first one of Wallace - "hanging on in there", I decided to focus on shots using the drink mats we got from Dublin - featuring Irish authors and poets.





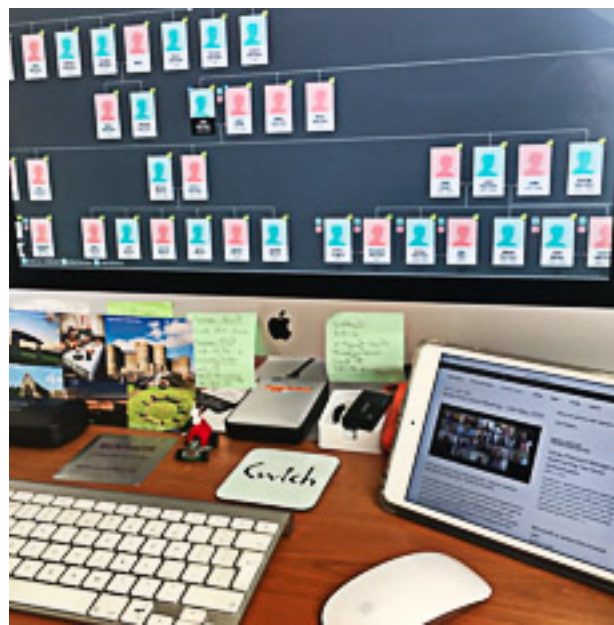








Seven days,  
seven images





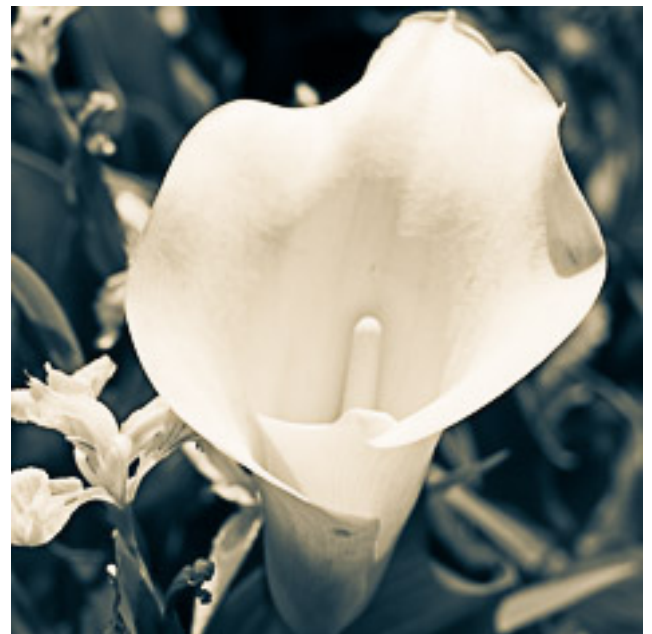






U3A Photo theme - black and white. Flowers and shrubs at the bottom of the garden.

Also a fish-eye view of the pond - quite appropriate I suppose, only the fish would have had to be out of the water.





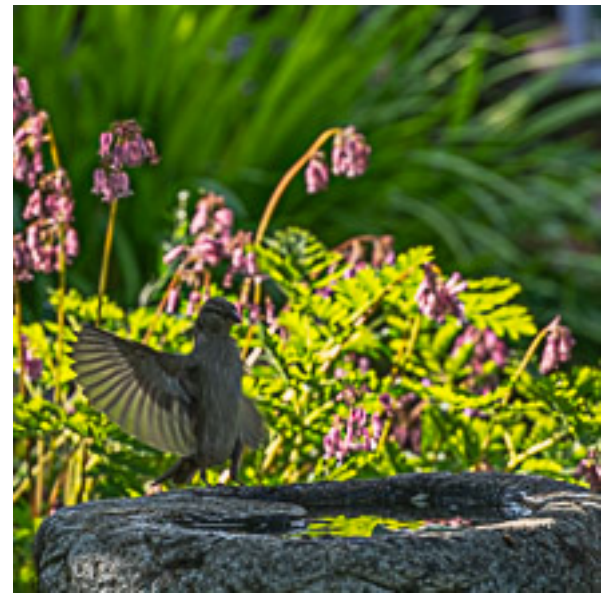


Sparrow on bird bath.

A nice pair of shots taken with my telephoto lens as I practised remote shutter control of the camera sitting in a deckchair.

The shot on the left is of a female goldfinch.

Then on the facing page, some more nonsense with Wallca et al.











A great time to get a wildlife camera and it gave us a lot of joy to see the hedgehogs (3 we think) visiting. We also **had a few** visits from rats, but between some safely placed bait and the neighbourhood cats, they seemed to be absent by the mid-summer.

A bit of fun also with Papa Smurf being a statue like a roundabout.

Then the orchids helped the sanity project this year as well. Thank you!!! I seem to have worked out how to re-generate their flowering and we've had a fantastic show all through the spring to autumn, with more still to come!

Then we had Dougie's birthday and his first bike.









The macro orchid shot



94 Orchid spray



Orchids in focus





















A quick trip down to **St Just to stay** with Gail, **Matin, James** and Tom in their holiday let, and a walk along the coast from Pendeen past The Levant and Botallack to St Just. The weather was not great but it was just good to escape from Cardiff - if only for a few days.







Before we went into "local lockdown" which prevented us from going across to Penarth to see the McDiarmids, we met up with Ruth and the boys on Llandaff Fields and later in Bute Park. By this time Dougie had abandoned his balances on his bike, and Finn was soon to start using the walk along bike.



















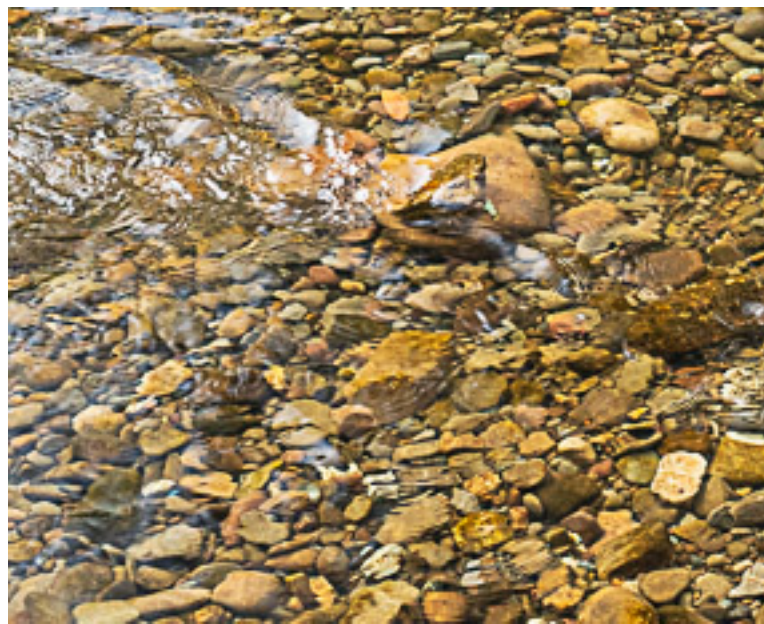






A few shots taken in Bute Park and along the Glam

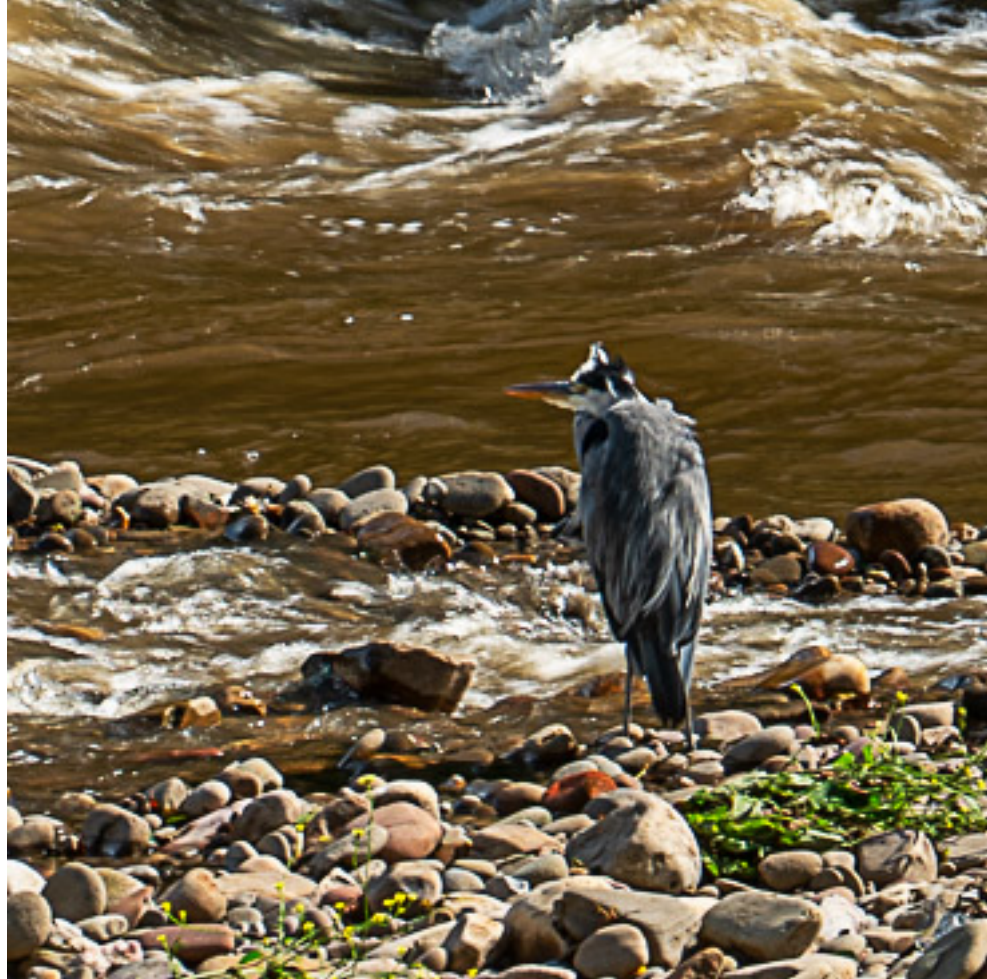
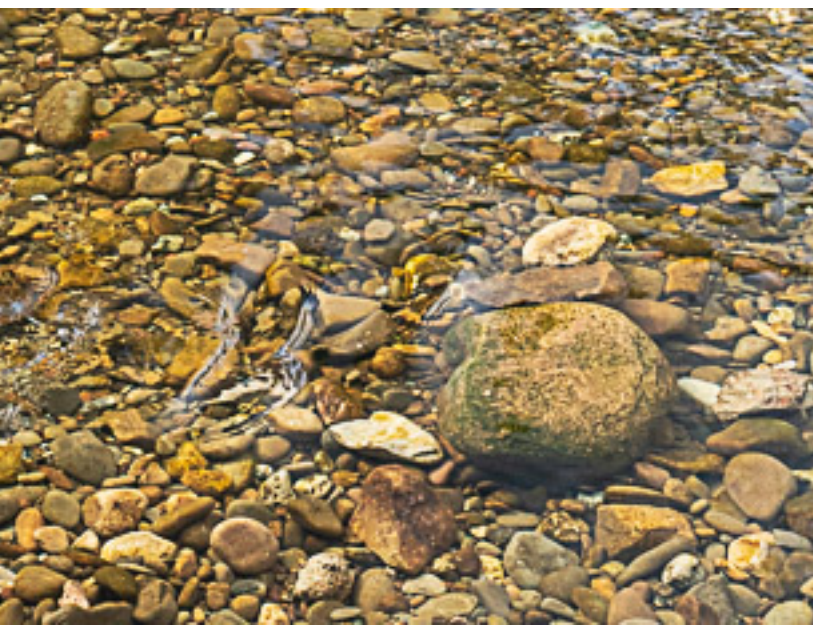
Taff water





organ canal.

- fit to drink!?















Resin droplets



Trapped





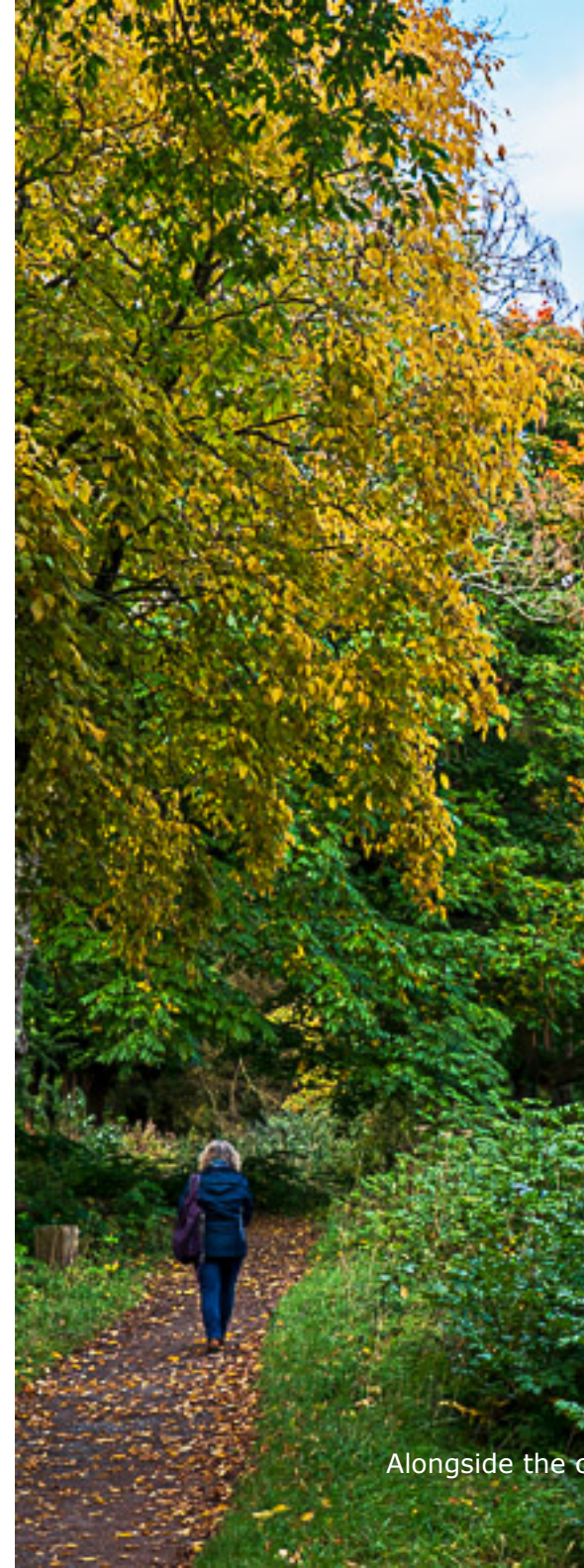
Feeder canal





Autumn colour

Berries and bokeh



Alongside the c





The castle from Bute Park







My new iPhone





Drying off





blowing coal gets to you





Another U3A "challenge" this time it was detail, and we were encouraged not to do macro shots. So for me it was a chance to take out my telephoto zoom lens and play with it. A couple of shots are obvious "long" shots of statues; the one of the miners's head, less obvious. It stands in front of the Glamorgan Building and is **one th back of** a "lords and ladies" triumphant - their wealth was **down to their hard** work. Then a couple of shots taken of the fountain in the Alexandra Gardens of the Civic Centre.





I took this shot as one of many using continuous shutter mode so that I could chose the one I liked the best. I called this one "Splash" and the one on the opposite page "Drip feed".

The last pictures are of a walk I did in early November in Parc Cefn Onn. The autumn colours were lovely and I was pleased with many of the shots.









Autumn leaves





Pumpkin pantry





A shaft of sunlight







Walkway under the acer



A carpet of red





Two flies enjoying the sun



Green is great but red is better





Autumn colour